Water is diverted from a stream a mile above the village and piped into the upper and lower tanks where people fill their buckets which they carry home on a shoulder yoke. Both tanks always attract children. Before faucets were installed, the two spigots on each tank were closed with a wooden stopper which the children often pulled to get a drink or water to play in. An open lot surrounding the upper water tank is another popular play area.

On the eastern side of the village below the main road lies a flat sandy plain, separating the actual beach from the houses above. Children are frequently found playing there or walking along the beach to the mouth of the Noro Mata and Fukuji rivers, which reach the sea about 400 yards away. To the west of the central village lie the tombs and the monument for the war dead of the village.

Many hills around the village drop off vertically toward the south; these drops are partly effects of the geological conditions, such as karst depressions, partly caused by erosion of drainage during the heavy rains. Narrow paths, leading up the steep claylike hillsides, are slippery and very treacherous during rains. On the way to school in Kawata, the neighboring village, children have to pass a section of the road where river and rains have washed away the bank so badly that a misstep on the edge of the road could lead to a fall of more than 50 feet.

The little river which runs through parts of the valley behind Taira is another gathering place of children. A path alongside it leads into the hills and mountain forest lands. Seven minutes walking along this path takes one to Umugui, a natural swimming hole which also serves as one of the favorite laundry places. During the summer the river offers several other popular swimming spots downstream from Umugui. There is also a little concrete bridge in the rice fields beyond the houses, where adults and children go to wash laundry and sometimes pots and pans. Yamagawa well is a water hole, lined with concrete, near the northwestern part of Taira. Before water faucets were installed, girls frequently went there to wash their hair and do laundry.

Children go to the fields to look for flowers and berries or, in the case of older boys, to cut grass for animals. Distances covered by any child depend, of course, on the age. Younger siblings under 5 accompany the older ones to places beyond the area, but no expeditions extend to areas that are not also regularly traversed by adults in the course of their daily duties. Perhaps because of the multiple rivers and water sources, the beach offers less enticement than one might expect. On some days a group may decide to play on the beach, but since sand is also available throughout the village, everybody will soon shift back to some other area inland.

Tropical plants, bushes, and trees grow at sea level. At higher ele-